

Buffalo 1999-0699

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please change the paragraph beginning at line 3 of page 16 to read as follows:

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--In addition to the Actions Triggered that are initiated by the Work-Flow Manager 202 in response to the Milestone Events, a Maintenance Program Scheduler 204 is used to invoke certain software programs at specific times. The Maintenance Program Scheduler 204 operates at a predetermined interval and scans the database for trouble tickets that meet predetermined criteria for the individual software programs. For example, the Maintenance Program Scheduler may initiate the automatic progress reporting program every 15 minutes and search for tickets wherein the customer is due a status report within 25 minutes, or may initiate the automatic closing program every hour every hour to search for tickets that have been communicated to the customer over a preceding 24 hours. Generally, any program may be triggered by the Work-Flow Manager or by the Scheduler.--

Please change the paragraph beginning at line 13 of page 16 to read as follows:

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--Figure 3 is a flow chart of another embodiment of steps in accordance with the method of the present invention. Automatic features of the BMP are shown in circles, manual features of the BMP are shown in squares, and external systems are shown in triangular form. Manual actions are shown by dashed lines. First, a customer form/report/ticket concerning a circuit problem is prepared by an agent 302 of the CCP and sent to the BMP, or the customer sends an email (EM) 304 that includes the customer form/report/ticket to the BMP. When the customer form/report/ticket has been transmitted, the automatic linking program 306 determines whether the problem reported has been caused by a higher level facility/equipment or is a lower level circuit problem. Where the problem relates to a higher level facility/equipment, a second ticket is automatically prepared for the higher level facility/equipment and the original ticket and the second ticket are correlated so that when the second ticket is updated, the original ticket is also updated. The automatic diagnosing program 308 diagnoses the problem as described above and, where the problem has been fixed, the automatic preparation for clearing program 318 is initiated. Where the problem exists in the Access Provider's

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portion of the circuit, the automatic referral program 310 automatically sends an electronic referral to the Access Provider. Where the automatic diagnose program 308 determines that manual intervention by a maintenance technician is needed, the automatic notification program 314 sends (not shown) an electronic message to the technician alerting him to the need for repair. Upon the AP's or the technician's completion of the repair, a message is sent to the automatic verification program 316. Then the automatic verification program 316 runs tests and performs alarm checks to determine if the problem has been repaired. Next, the automatic preparation for clearing program 318 pre-populates the clearance information and analysis codes on the ticket to indicate that the problem has been repaired. Where desired, an automatic closing referral program 320 may send an electronic message to the Access Provider to indicate that the public switched network service accepts closure after verification that the circuit is working correctly. The automatic customer notification program 322 then provides an update to the customer by the interactive voice response system indicating that the problem is fixed; and if the customer confirms that the problem is fixed, the automatic closing program 326 automatically closes the ticket. Following the automatic preparation for clearing program execution, alternatively, the BMP sends a message to the customer that the customer may view the status of the ticket on the EMS (Electronic Maintenance System - the customer's access to the web gateway). Where the problem is fixed, the automatic closing program 326 closes out the ticket. As indicated in ~~the insert box 328~~ Figure 3, the automatic progress reporting program 330 may be implemented when desired such as at predetermined times, upon initiation by the automatic referral program, upon initiation by the automatic notification program, or by an indication that a report on progress due is needed.--
